

MASTER OF
KUNG FU

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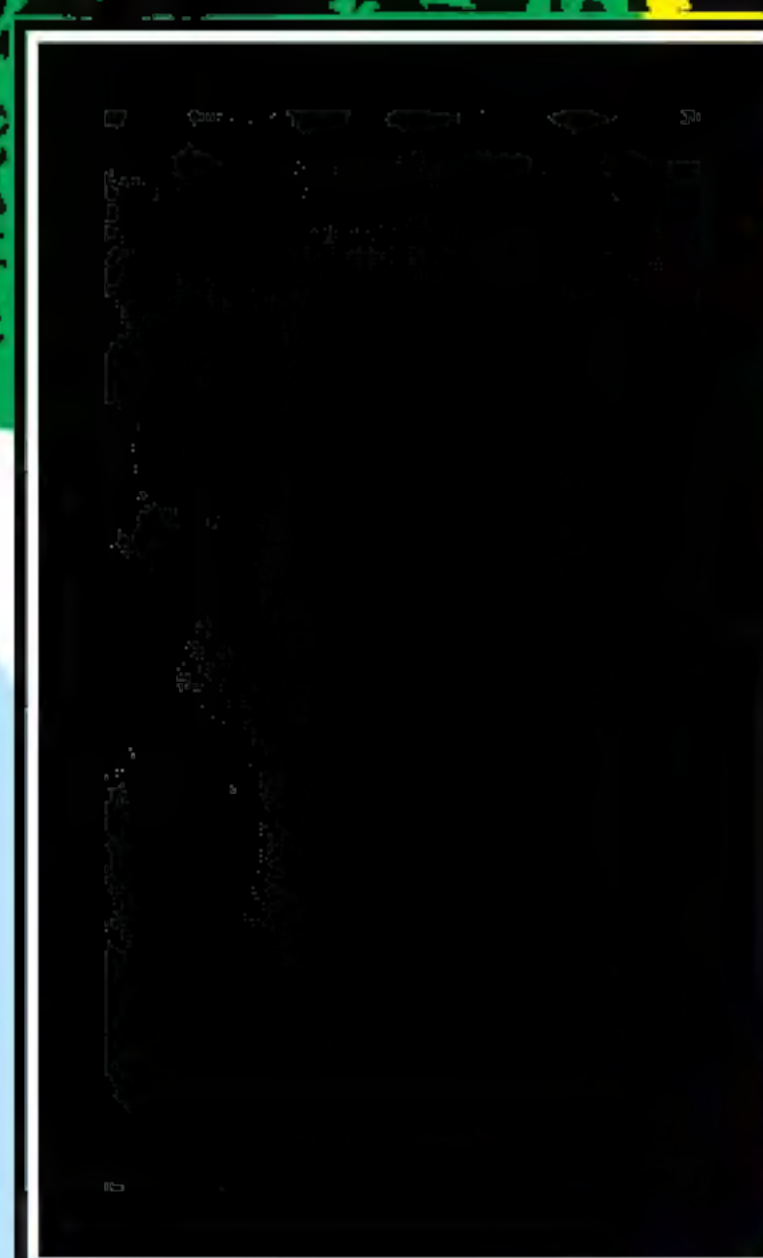
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THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU

DIE,
SON OF
FU MANCHU!

YOU WERE
MAD TO PIT
MERE KUNG FU
SKILL AGAINST THE
UNSTOPPABLE
SUMO!



"Call me Shang-Chi, as my **father** did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father. Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu**, the most insidiously evil man on earth...and that to **honor** him would bring nothing but **dishonor** to the spirit of my **name**."

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **MASTER OF KUNG FU!**™

Featuring supporting characters created by SAX ROHMER

DOUG MOENCH / PAUL GULACY / PABLO MARCOS / J. ROSEN / P. GOLDBERG / ARCHIE GOODWIN
WRITER / ARTIST / INKER / LETTERER / COLORIST / EDITOR

"AGAIN, MR. RESTON--
EXPLAIN YOUR CONDUCT!"

"TELL US **WHY** YOU'VE DONE IT--
WHY YOU'VE CHANGED SIDES!"



PART TWO (CLIVE RESTON): **THE SPIDER SPELL!**



"I **CAME TO** IN A MATTER OF **SECONDS**, BUT DECIDED TO **PLAY DEAD**-- WATCHING GRISWOLD AND FAH LO SUEE THROUGH **SQUINTED EYES**..."

-- KILL HIM **NOW**, BEFORE HE CAUSES ANY **MORE** TROUBLE.

NO. I'VE DECIDED HE WILL BE MORE VALUABLE **ALIVE**.

WE MAY BE ABLE TO USE HIM TO **IMPEDE** NAYLAND SMITH'S **PROGRESS**. IF MY FATHER CAN USE **DR. PETRIE**, THEN WHY SHOULD WE NOT USE **RESTON**?

CHANKAR! COME!

"HE **CAME**..."

"...THE WHOLE LOUSY, LUMBERING MOUNTAIN OF HIM."

TAKE THIS MAN INTO THE CABIN AND **BIND** HIM. IF HE **AWAKENS**, SEE THAT HE GOES TO **SLEEP** AGAIN.

"TIME FOR A **QUICK DECISION**. CONTINUE PLAYING DEAD AND BE TAKEN **CAPTIVE**? OR MAKE MY PLAY AND RISK **REAL DEATH**?"

"CHANKAR'S **SHADOW** IN MY EYES WAS THE **DECIDING FACTOR**."

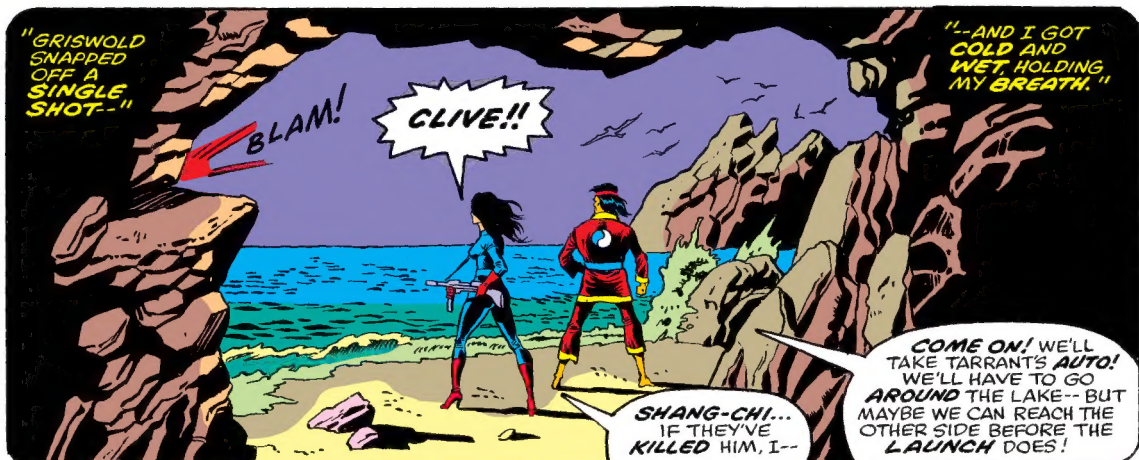
"IT WAS LIKE PUNCHING A **BOULDER**. BUT AT LEAST IT GAVE ME TIME TO **BOLT** FOR THE **SIDE**..."

I TOLD YOU WE SHOULD HAVE **KILLED HIM**--!!

"GRISWOLD-- OR **TARRANT**, TAKE YOUR **PICK**-- WAS STILL FUMBLING FOR HIS GUN AS I WENT OVER THE **SIDE**."

STOP HIM!!

"FOR SOME REASON, I REMEMBER HEARING THE **GULLS SHRILL**."



"THE LAUNCH WAS ALMOST ACROSS WHEN MY BREATH RAN OUT. EITHER THEY THOUGHT I'D BEEN HIT OR SIMPLY COULDN'T SPARE THE TIME FOR A SEARCH."



"I'D NEVER CATCH THEM WITH THE BREAST-STROKE-- BUT THEN, THERE WEREN'T MANY CABS AROUND, EITHER."

TOO MANY CURVES IN THIS ROAD, SHANG-CHI. I CAN'T GO ANY FASTER! BUT WE'VE GOT TO REACH THE OTHER SIDE IN TIME!



"IT TOOK ME SOME TEN MINUTES TO REACH THE OPPOSITE SHORE. THE LAUNCH WAS LONG DESERTED, OF COURSE..."



"...BUT I SAW LIGHTS ON THE SIDE OF A MOUNTAIN-- ENOUGH LIGHTS TO CONVINCE ME THAT FAH LO SUEE'S CARAVAN WAS HEADED UPWARD."

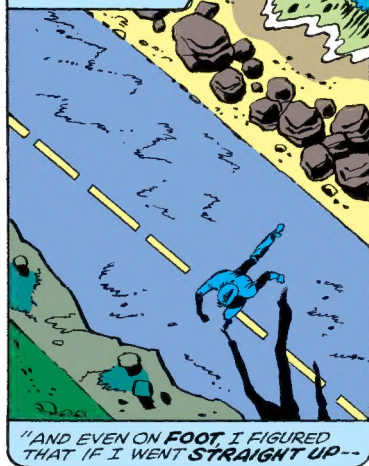


"THE LONE STRAGGLER CINCHED IT."

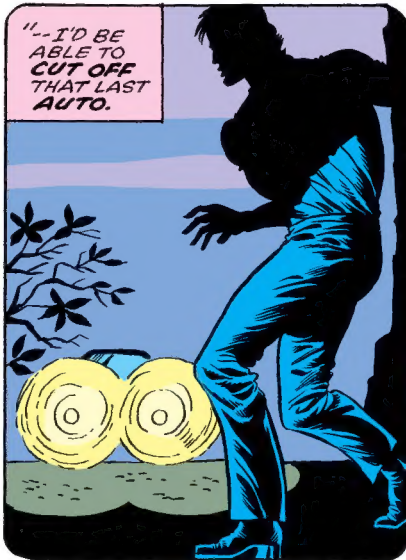


"I RECOGNIZED THE AUTO AS TARRANT'S-- OR GRISWOLD'S ANYWAY."

"I'D LEFT LEIKO AND CHI ACROSS THE LAKE, REMEMBER, SO I WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD TAKE A STAB AT FOLLOWING."



"AND EVEN ON FOOT, I FIGURED THAT IF I WENT STRAIGHT UP--"



"--I'D BE ABLE TO CUT OFF THAT LAST AUTO."



"I USED BRUSH AND SHADOWS FOR COVER AS IT PASSED, AND THAT'S WHEN I SAW THAT THE 'STRAGGLERS' WERE REALLY--"

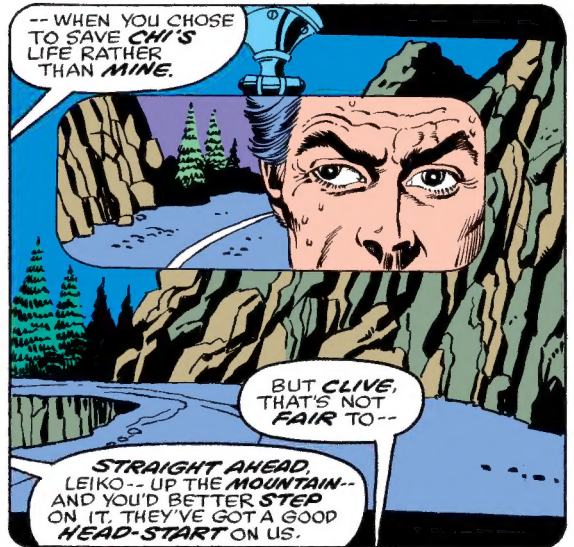
LEIKO!
CHI!
HOLD UP!
IT'S ME--
RESTON!



CLIVE! THANK GOD YOU'RE ALL RIGHT! I WAS AFRAID--!

STUFF IT, LEIKO.

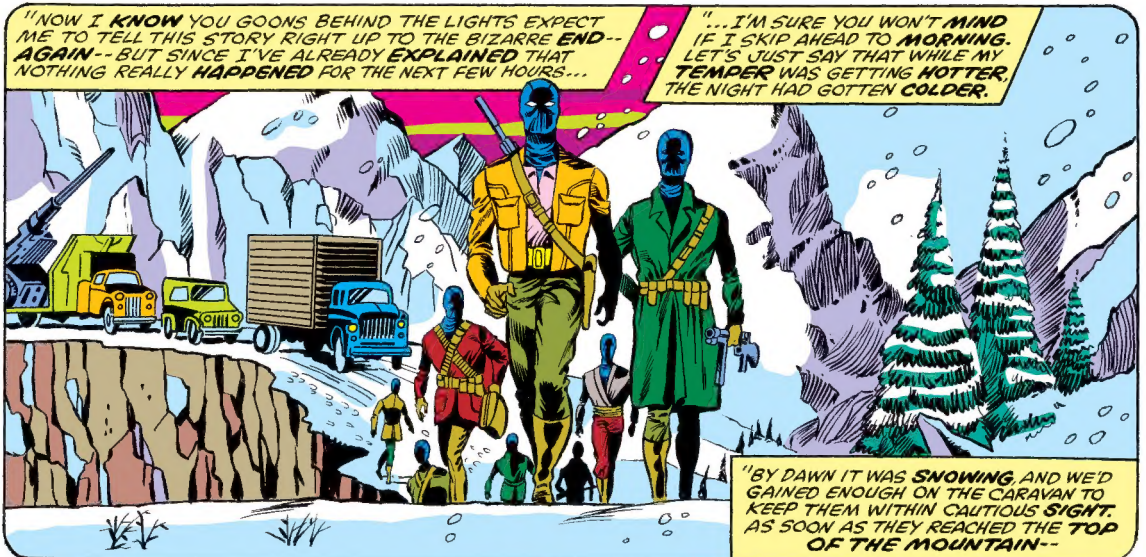
YOU WEREN'T VERY CONCERNED ABOUT MY WELFARE BACK IN TARRANT'S CHALET--



-- WHEN YOU CHOSE TO SAVE CHI'S LIFE RATHER THAN MINE.

BUT CLIVE, THAT'S NOT FAIR TO--

STRAIGHT AHEAD, LEIKO-- UP THE MOUNTAIN-- AND YOU'D BETTER STEP ON IT, THEY'VE GOT A GOOD HEAD-START ON US.



"NOW I KNOW YOU GOONS BEHIND THE LIGHTS EXPECT ME TO TELL THIS STORY RIGHT UP TO THE BIZARRE END-- AGAIN-- BUT SINCE I'VE ALREADY EXPLAINED THAT NOTHING REALLY HAPPENED FOR THE NEXT FEW HOURS..."

"...I'M SURE YOU WON'T MIND IF I SKIP AHEAD TO MORNING. LET'S JUST SAY THAT WHILE MY TEMPER WAS GETTING HOTTER, THE NIGHT HAD GOTTEN COLDER."

"BY DAWN IT WAS SNOWING, AND WE'D GAINED ENOUGH ON THE CARAVAN TO KEEP THEM WITHIN CAUTIOUS SIGHT, AS SOON AS THEY REACHED THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN--"



"--THEY WENT DOWN THE OTHER SIDE INTO A GORGE, AND HEADED TOWARD ANOTHER MOUNTAIN.

LOOKS LIKE A PRIVATE LANDING STRIP OVER THERE.

AND A WAITING JET, NO DOUBT--



--WHICH FAH LO SUEE PLANS TO TAKE TO THE ARCTIC IN HOPES OF CUTTING OFF HER FATHER.

SO OUR PROBLEM NOW IS CUTTING HER OFF FROM THAT JET BEFORE SHE CUTS OFF FU MANCHU.

IF ONLY WE HAD SOME GRENADES TO TOSS DOWN THERE ON HER HEAD, WE--



FAH LO SUEE IS MY SISTER, RESTON.

"AND THAT'S ALL CHI SAID.

"THERE'S SOMETHING HAPPENING TO HIM--HE'S CHANGING...



"...AND I DON'T KNOW IF I LIKE IT.

YOUR SISTER?! IN CASE YOU'VE FORGOTTEN, CHI, SHE'S THE ONE WHO ORDERED YOUR DEATH LAST NIGHT!

AND SHE'S ALSO THE ONE WHO'S RACING FU MANCHU RIGHT NOW TO SEE WHO WINS CONTROL OF THE BLOODY WORLD.



SHE IS STILL MY SISTER, RESTON.

"ONE THING'S FOR CERTAIN-- I DIDN'T LIKE HIS ATTITUDE THEN.

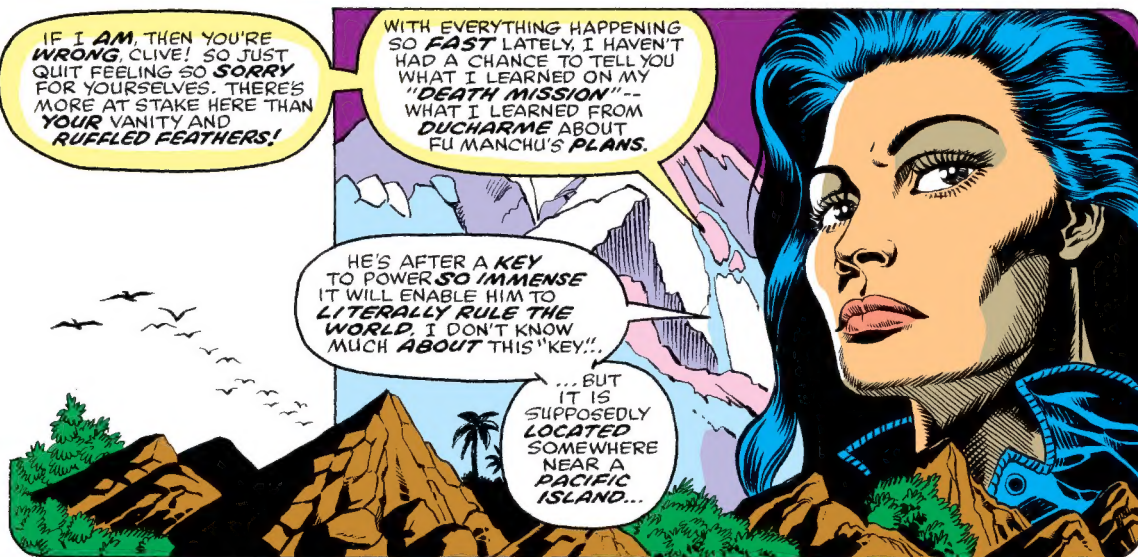
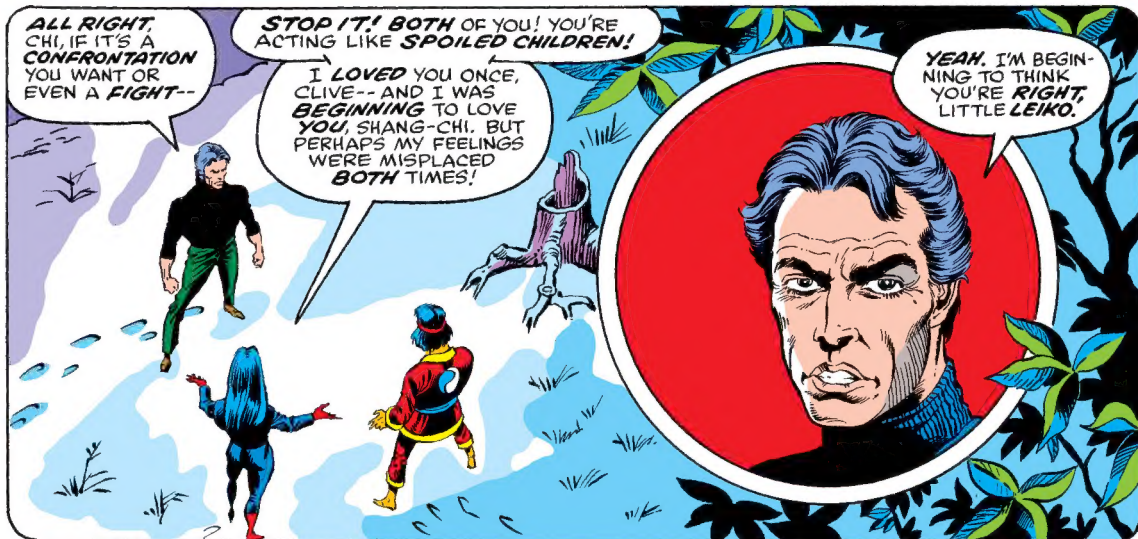
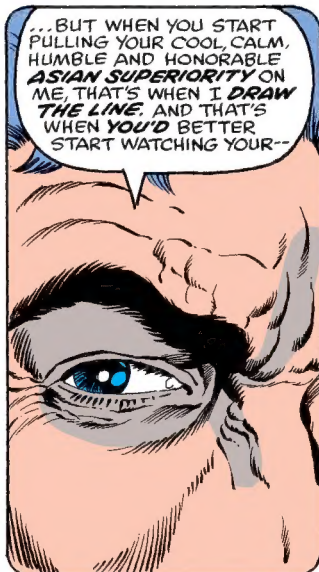
SHE'S YOUR SISTER, ALL RIGHT-- AND THAT MAKES HER FU MANCHU'S DAUGHTER! AND WHILE YOU HAD ME CONVINCED THAT "LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON" DOESN'T ALWAYS HOLD TRUE, I'M BEGINNING TO WONDER JUST WHOSE SIDE YOU'RE REALLY--



CLIVE! SHANG-CHI'S RIGHT.

EVEN IF YOU WERE ONLY MAKING A GRIM JOKE ABOUT THOSE GRENADES, THERE'S NO NEED TO TALK ABOUT DEATH AT THIS STAGE.

WELL NOW, ISN'T THIS JUST COZY! THE TWO LOVEBIRDS GANGING UP ON POOR LOST CONFUSED OLD CLIVE!



"...AND THE **NATURE** OF THIS 'KEY' IS SUCH THAT IT CONTAINS A **SECOND KEY**-- AND THE SECOND, A **THIRD**."

CELESTIAL ONE, IT IS MY **UNFORTUNATE DUTY** TO REPORT--

--THAT YOUR SERVANT **LANCASTER SNEED**--

--HAS **FAILED**.

HE WAS DEFEATED BY YOUR SON, **SHANG-CHI**, AT THE SWISS ESTATE OF **SIR HERBERT GRIS**--

I NO LONGER **HAVE** A SON.
AND IF YOU VALUE YOUR **POSITION** WITHIN THE RANKS OF MY **SI-FAN**--

--AS WELL AS YOUR **LIFE** ON THIS **WORLD**, YOU WILL NEVER AGAIN SPEAK THE NAME **SHANG-CHI** IN MY PRESENCE.

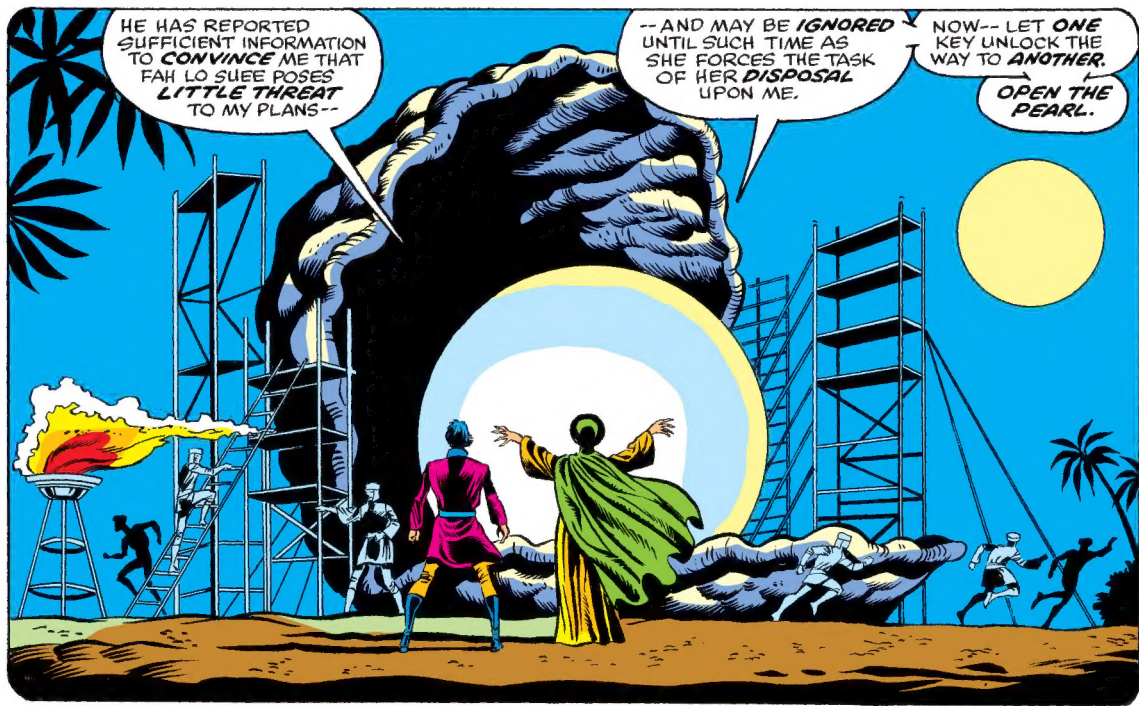
AS FOR NAYLAND SMITH'S NEPHEW **SNEED**-- OR **SHOCK-WAVE**-- HIS ELIMINATION IS OF **NO CONSEQUENCE**.

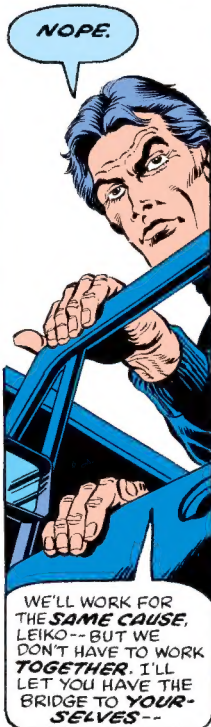
HIS **SURVEILLANCE MISSION** WITHIN MY DAUGHTER'S **ORIENTAL EXPEDITIONERS** ORGANIZATION HAS LONG SINCE PASSED THE STAGE OF **USEFULNESS**.

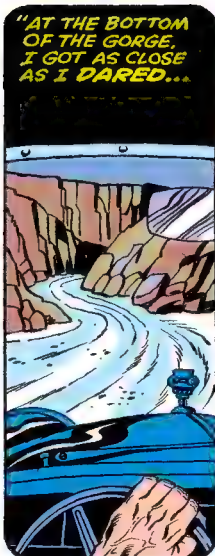
HE HAS REPORTED SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO **CONVINCE** ME THAT **FAH LO SUEE** POSES **LITTLE THREAT** TO MY PLANS--

--AND MAY BE **IGNORED** UNTIL SUCH TIME AS SHE FORCES THE TASK OF HER **DISPOSAL** UPON ME.

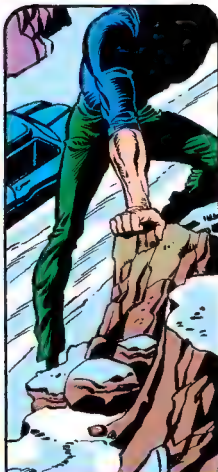
NOW-- LET **ONE KEY** UNLOCK THE WAY TO **ANOTHER**.
OPEN THE PEARL.







"AT THE BOTTOM OF THE GORGE, I GOT AS CLOSE AS I **DARED**..."



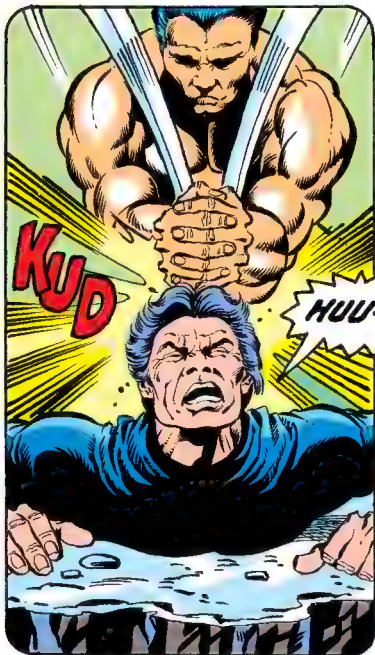
"...AND PULLED OFF TO THE SIDE FOR A CLOSER-- BUT **SAFER**-- LOOK."

"THE CARAVAN HAD **HALTED**, MAKING ME WONDER IF LEIKO AND CHI HAD ALREADY **REACHED** THE AIR-STRIP COMPLEX AND MANAGED, SOMEHOW, TO GIVE FAH LO SUEE **PAUSE**."



"NOT BLOODY **LIKELY**, BUT THERE WERE NO **OTHER** EXPLANATIONS..."

"THEN, AS I WAS THINKING ABOUT HOW BIG THAT **CHANKAR** MONSTER WAS--"



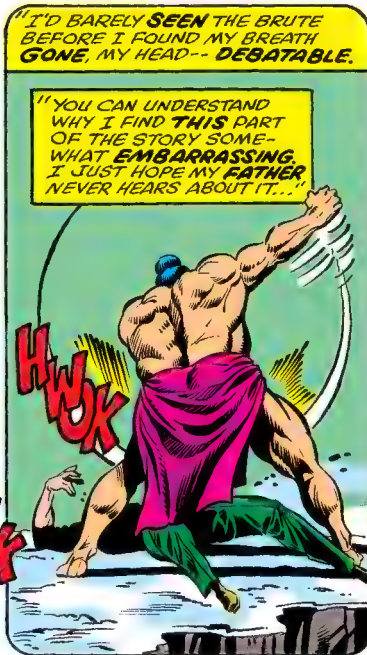
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HUU-AHH!!



"--I LEARNED HOW **QUIET** HE COULD BE."

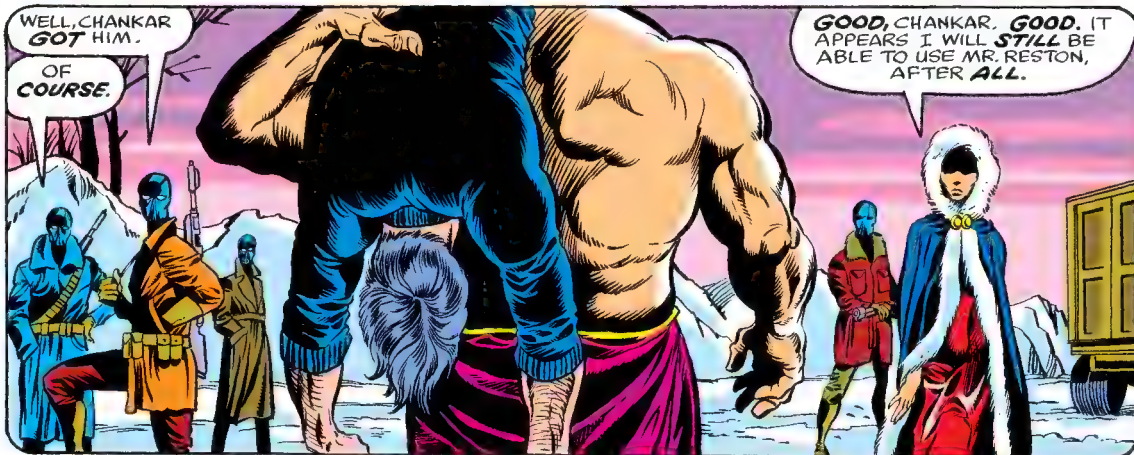
FWAK



"I'D BARELY **SEEN** THE BRUTE BEFORE I FOUND MY BREATH **GONE**, MY HEAD-- **DEBATABLE**."

"YOU CAN UNDERSTAND WHY I FIND **THIS** PART OF THE STORY SOMEWHAT **EMBARRASSING**. I JUST HOPE MY **FATHER** NEVER HEARS ABOUT IT..."

HWOK



WELL, CHANKAR **GOT** HIM.

OF **COURSE**.

GOOD, CHANKAR. **GOOD**. IT APPEARS I WILL **STILL** BE ABLE TO USE MR. RESTON, AFTER **ALL**.

"THE DIM **STAR-BURSTS** TOOK UP ALL THE SPACE IN MY EYES, BUT I COULD HEAR HER."

NOW, MR. RESTON--ONE SCENT OF **MIMOSA**...

"IT STANK--SICKLY SWEET--INTOXICATING."

...AND YOU WILL OBEY WHATEVER COMMAND I GIVE.

YOU WILL STAND AT MY SIDE, AND YOU WILL NOT FLEE.

"SHE WASN'T KIDDING."

AS FOR OUR TWO FRIENDS UP ON THE **SUSPENSION BRIDGE**... REMEMBER THAT I STILL WANT **LEIKO WU ALIVE**.

YOU WILL ADVANCE UP THE MOUNTAIN TOWARD THE AIRSTRIP AND DRAW HER FIRE.

WHEN HER AMMUNITION IS DEPLETED, CHANKAR WILL TAKE OVER--WITH HIS **BARE HANDS**.

"SO UP THEY WENT, WITH ME HELPLESSLY WATCHING AT FAH LO SUEE'S SIDE.

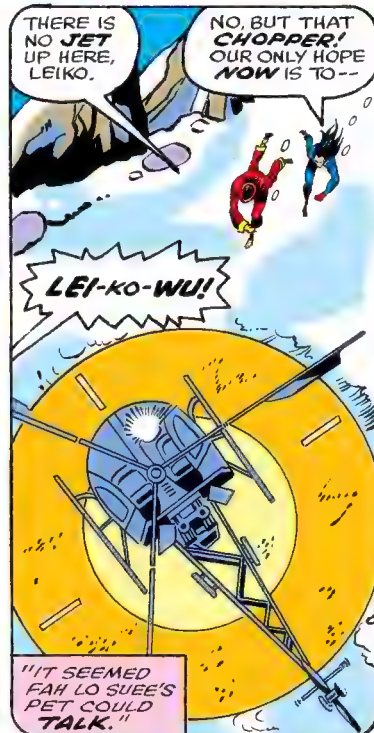
"I KNOW YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, BUT I TELL YOU I WAS A COMPLETE ROBOT--MY MIND SET ON IDLE, I COULD SEE AND HEAR EVERYTHING NOW, BUT I COULDN'T DO A THING ABOUT IT--"

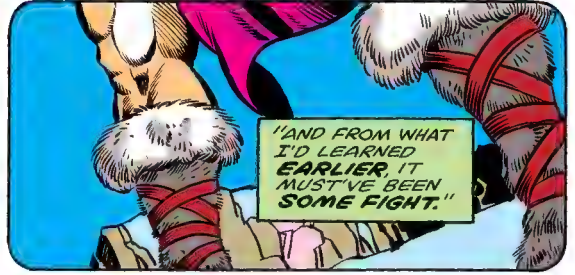
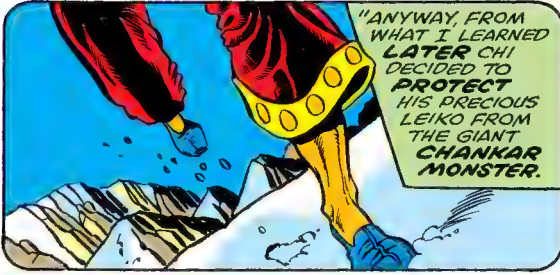
"...NOT WITHOUT THAT DEVIL-WOMAN'S COMMAND. IT WAS THAT **MIMOSA GAS**--COMBINED WITH THE POWER OF HER **WILL**, HER HYPNOTIC VOICE."

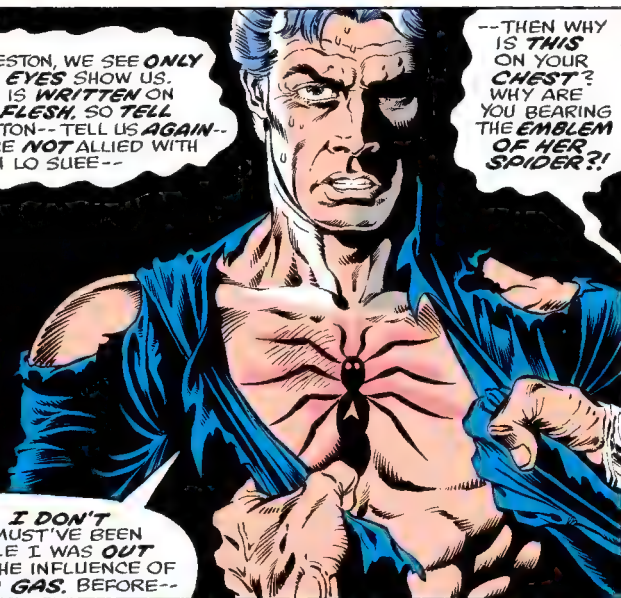
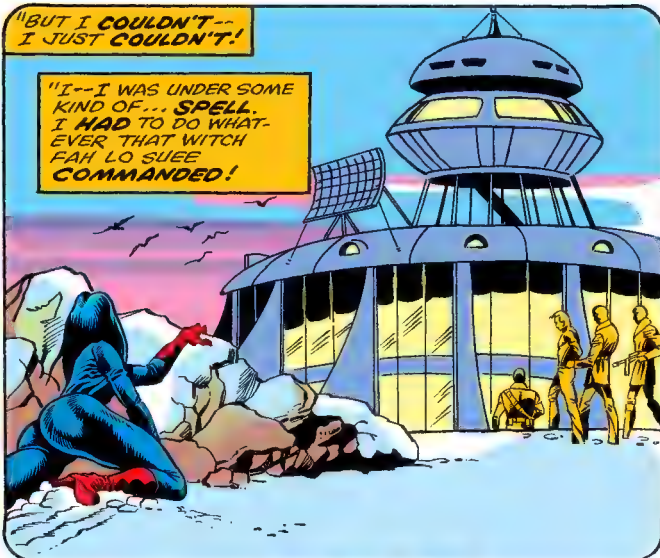
YOU ARE **INSANE**, FAH LO SUEE--RISKING A **DOZEN MEN** ON THE REMOTE POSSIBILITY THAT **LEIKO WU** MIGHT POSSESS SOME **INSIGNIFICANT INFORMATION** ON **FU MANCHU'S PLANS**.

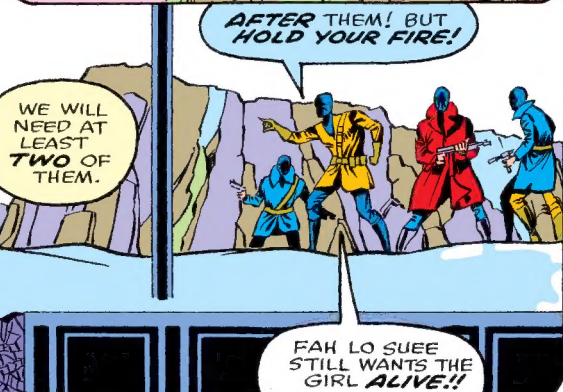
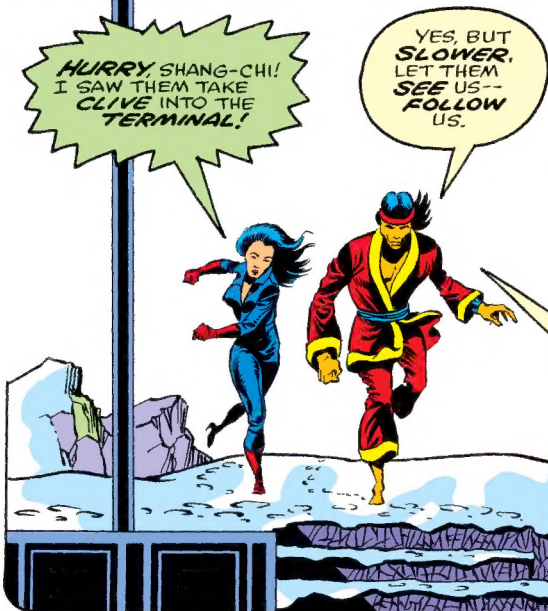
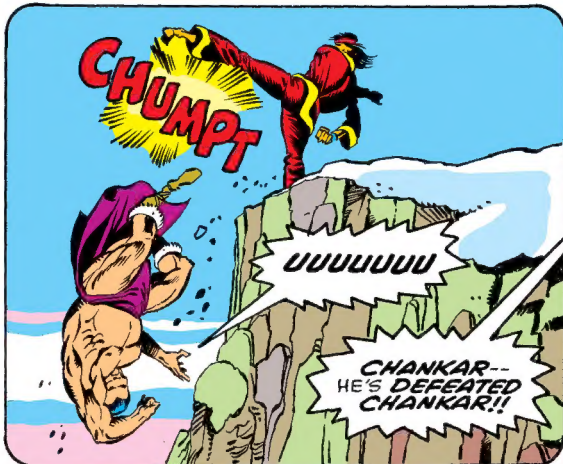
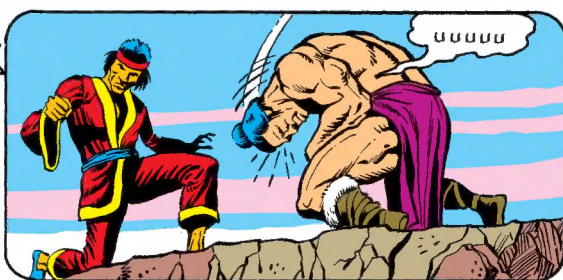
INSANE, GRISWOLD? PERHAPS.

"AND SHE LOOKED UP AT THE **SWAYING BRIDGE**--AS THE **GUNFIRE** STARTED."









"THE SPIDERS SWARMED OVER ME-- THEIR FURRY LEGS CREEPING AND SLIDING OVER THE HAIRS ON MY ARMS-- CRAWLING ON ME-- TRYING TO BURROW UNDER MY CLOTHES!"



"THEN I HEARD A SOUND. A DOOR. GRATING--SLIDING OPEN..."



"...AND IT WAS OVER. IT WAS... HER."



"...UNTIL I FELT THE SNOW CRUNCHING UNDER MY FEET, COLD AIR FILLING MY CHEST."



VERY WELL. WE WILL LEAVE NOW, AND RETURN WITH THE JET FOR THE REST OF YOU. HAVE THE EQUIPMENT READY FOR LOADING.



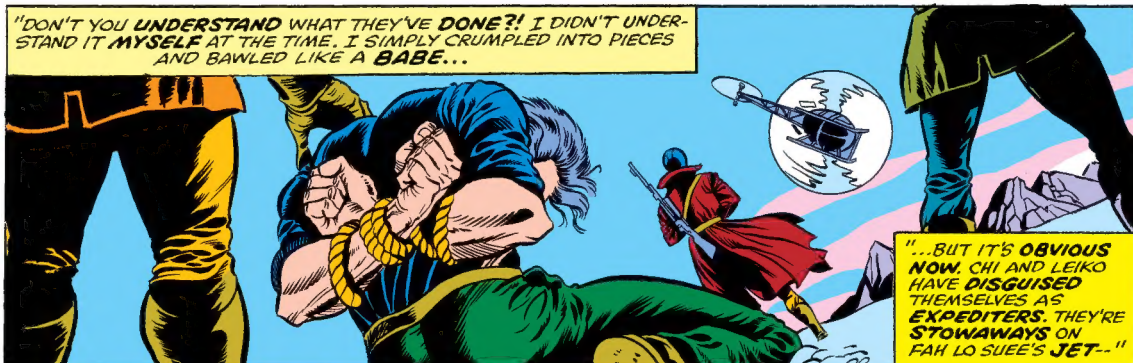
"--ENOUGH FOR ME TO PROTEST, AT LEAST."



"A COUPLE OF EXPEDITERS FOLLOWED HER AND GRISWOLD..."



"DON'T YOU **UNDERSTAND** WHAT THEY'VE **DONE**?! I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND IT **MYSELF** AT THE TIME. I SIMPLY CRUMPLED INTO PIECES AND BAWLED LIKE A **BABE**...



"...BUT IT'S **OBVIOUS** **NOW**. CHI AND LEIKO HAVE **DISGUISED** THEMSELVES AS **EXPEDITERS**. THEY'RE **STOWAWAYS** ON FAH LO SUEE'S **JET**--"

--PROBABLY ON THEIR WAY UP TO THE **ARCTIC** WITH HER, **RIGHT NOW**!

ANYWAY, THAT'S THE **END** OF IT. **GRISWOLD'S** MEN-- NUMBERS **SIX** THROUGH **NINE**-- FOUND ME WHERE I'D BEEN **LEFT**, ON MY KNEES BABBLING ABOUT **FAH LO SUEE**-- WITH THIS **BLOODY SPIDER** ON MY CHEST.



I TRIED TO TELL THEM WHAT'D **HAPPENED**-- AND THAT THEIR **BOSS** WAS REALLY A **COUNTER-AGENT**--THAT **GRISWOLD** IS REALLY **TARRANT**.

THEY DIDN'T **BELIEVE** ME, OF COURSE. SAID THAT **GRISWOLD** HAD BEEN WITH **MI-6** FOR **THIRTY-FIVE YEARS**, AND HAD SERVED EVERY **MINUTE** OF THOSE YEARS **FAITHFULLY**...

...SO THEY TURNED ME OVER TO **YOU**-- AND THESE **BLASTED** **HELLISH LIGHTS**.

ALL RIGHT, **MR. RESTON**, THAT WILL BE **SUFFICIENT**.

YOU MEAN **YOU**... YOU **BELIEVE** ME? **FINALLY**?!

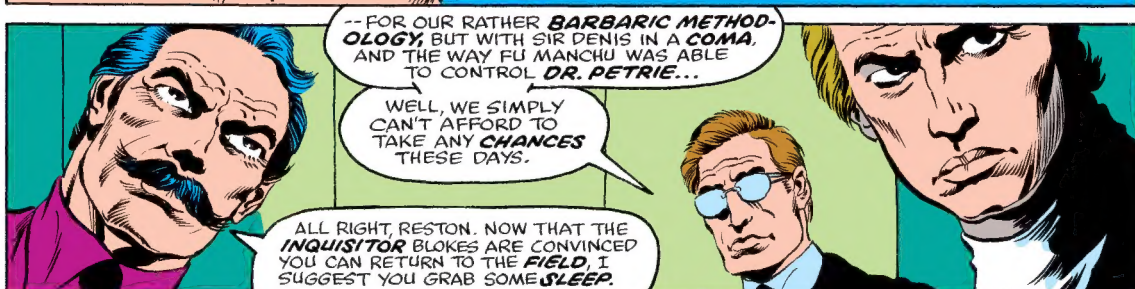
FOR THE TIME BEING, WE SHALL **HAVE** TO BELIEVE **YOU**, **MR. RESTON**, AND ASK YOU TO **FORGIVE** US--



--FOR OUR RATHER **BARBARIC** **METHODOLOGY**, BUT WITH **SIR DENIS** IN A **COMA**, AND THE WAY **FU MANCHU** WAS ABLE TO CONTROL **DR. PETRIE**...

WELL, WE SIMPLY CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE ANY **CHANCES** THESE DAYS.

ALL RIGHT, **RESTON**. NOW THAT THE **INQUISITOR** **BLOKES** ARE CONVINCED YOU CAN RETURN TO THE **FIELD**, I SUGGEST YOU GRAB SOME **SLEEP**.



YOU'RE GONNA **NEED** IT BEFORE YOU TRY TO **RENDEZVOUS** WITH **LEIKO** AND THE **CHINAMAN** UP IN THE **ARCTIC**.

YOUR **FLIGHT**'LL PROBABLY **LEAVE** IN A FEW **HOURS**.

THANKS, **TARR**.

THANKS... A... HEAP--



NEXT ISSUE: ACTION, EXCITEMENT, MYSTERY AND MOOD! THE **FORTRESS** IN THE **ARCTIC**! AN ANCIENT **SAMURAI** RESURRECTED! **SHANG-CHI** AND **LEIKO** BATTLING SIDE-BY-SIDE AGAINST IMPOSSIBLE ODDS! **RESTON**, **LARNER**, **FU MANCHU**-- AND **MORE!!** ALL IN--

PART THREE (LEIKO WU): PHANTOM SAND

MISSIVES TO THE MASTER!

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Dear Marvel,

Re: MASTER OF KUNG FU #42. Superlatives fail me. The Moench/Gulacy team has created another classic that will go down in Marvel annals next to such stellar epics as the Warlock quest and the Dr. Strange Meets Eternity saga. Quality of artwork is superb, and the storyline is chillingly captivating. But enough of this gay banter.

On to the gist of my one complaint: How DARE you reveal the identity of the mole before I could write and TELL you the identity of the mole? (I have this irrational desire to win a no-prize.) At least we agreed it was Petrie, and that's something.

Incidentally, I'm glad to see Miss Greville making an appearance; Sir Lionel Barton's granddaughter, no? And while we're discussing the Sax Rohmer aspects of the Shang-Chi strip, there's one thing on which I hope you maintain consistency in issues to come. Fu Manchu's eyes are *green*, as are Fah Lo Suee's. (I keep wondering why Shang-Chi has not inherited this dominant characteristic.)

But back to MOKF #42: The two "halves" of the plot running simultaneously was an excellent format for presenting the fight—which would have been more violent, perhaps, but far less effective if run in one piece. The stop-start action gave the scenes an impact far beyond the trading of blows which occurs in the ordinary fight sequences of most other comic books. Here, each blow HURT. Indeed, "The Clock of Shattered Time" is a devastating work. Well wrought!

Cathy Butterfield
The Lone Idahoan
Middlebury College
Box C 2763
Middlebury, VT 05753

Sorry we had to cut so much of your letter, Cathy—more than twice the amount of wordage we managed to print above—but it was sooooo looonnnng! Highly interesting, too, of course—and that's why we're so sorry. But we're glad you brought up the Sax Rohmer antecedents on which certain portions of the MOKF strip is built (i.e. those elements concerning the characters Fu Manchu, Nayland Smith, Petrie, and others); it gives us a chance to mention that Rohmer fans should be intrigued by our plans for future issues, particularly the remaining installments of our current six-part Fu Manchu saga.

And that's all we'll say about the matter...for now.

Dear Doug & Paul,

As a fellow artist and art instructor, I hate to see good work fail to reach its full potential, due to the manner in which it is presented rather than to the nature of the work itself. Pollard and Buscema usually bring joy to my heart...but their work on Shang-Chi brings tears to my eyes.

Why? I guess it's because Gulacy was *born* to illustrate MASTER OF KUNG FU. Or maybe it's simply due to the fact that Gulacy is the greatest comic book artist who has ever lived.

But whatever the reason, please don't subject other artists to comparison with Gulacy on this title. They can only fail—pitifully! The only other artists who have succeeded as well with a specific title were Starlin on WARLOCK and Smith on CONAN.

Lastly, I can't close this letter without a word on the amazing Moench. That's the word: *Amazing!*

Matt Adone
Somerset, NJ 08837

Messrs. Moench, Gulacy, et al,

It is for your further edification, and for that of the MOKF reading audience, that we write. We at the Wold Newton Meteoritics Society (the name is obvious to those who have read Philip Jose Farmer's biographies of Tarzan or Doc Savage) would like to point out that Clive Reston is not the only member of your cast who can claim relation to the Great Detective or 007. In point of fact, there are no fewer than *four* characters in your magazine who are thus related. First, Sir Denis Nayland Smith is not only related, but is the *nephew* of Sherlock Holmes, being the son of Sigrina, Holmes' sister. Next we have Fu Manchu himself, who is tenuously related through such celebrities as Sir William Clayton and the Fourth Duke of Greystoke. This, of course, makes our favorite Master of Kung Fu—Shang Chi—a Wold Newton Family member and, including Mr. Reston, achieves a total of four relatives occupying one magazine.

Talk about family affairs, eh?

The Wold Newton Meteoritics Society
1260 Glenwood Ave.
Grand Junction, CO 81501

Whew. We don't know about the rest of you people out there, but Doug and Paul publicly disavow any relationship to the authors of the above communication. Indeed, they found the alleged information contained therein scary enough to send them scurrying for sanctuary up in the leafy boughs of their respective family trees. (This kind of inbreeding can get *dangerous!* And if either one of our two Stalwart Lads should nick himself on a thorny branch up there, cross your fingers against the chance of hemophilia...)

Dear Doug and Paul,

What can I say? MASTER OF KUNG FU #42 was certainly no disappointment. Lord, people, I *try!* I mean, I really TRY to find some tiny mistake...one slip-up...one goof...the slightest lack of perfection in quality—but I fail every time! Even the mismatched team of Gulacy and Sutton this issue managed to turn in some great artwork. (But *not* as good as Gulacy and Adkins or, better still, Gulacy and *Gulacy*...)

So what else can I say? Except keep up the great work!

Larry Dean
6362 Laurentian Ct.
Flint, MI 48504

Keep up the great work? But of *course*, Larry—what *else* would you expect us to do?

Seriously, tho, your evaluation of the Gulacy/Sutton art team as "mismatched" is one shared by many other readers and Bullpenners alike. As a matter of fact, Doug spoke with Tom Sutton himself yesterday and while Tom fully appreciates the beauty of Paul's pencils, even *he* felt that his inking style was inappropriate to the "sleek precision" of the Gulacy line technique. So why did he ink that issue in the *first* place, you ask? Well, because it was a deadline-emergency and because he was *asked*—nay, *implored*—to ink it, and because MOKF #42 would have been a *reprint* without his timely assist. Thanks, Tom—again.

(And if you'd care to take a gander at Tom's inking where it *is* appropriate—namely, on his own pencils—then start following our black and white PLANET OF THE APES magazine, wherein Mr. Sutton makes frequent and masterful contributions to the "Future History Chronicles" series. You'll be glad you did—we guarantee it!)

And that leaves us just enough room for our customary closing admonition of...be good.